SEVENTY-FIFTH

Anniversary

of

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

1873 - 1948

WAYNE AVENUE AND HARVEY STREET
GERMANTOWN, PHILADELPHIA
PENNSYLVANIA

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ST. PETER'S CHURCH

Down through the years from strength to strength unfolding,
O let us build on a firm foundation sure;
Mortar and stone can raise—for all man's molding—
Only a shell of masonry insecure;
No costly treasure fashioned of human striving,
No fine achievement of leadership alone,
Nor beauty of liturgy made of man's contriving
Can build the fabric safe on its cornerstone;
It must be lifted on luminous faith, receiving
A boundless vision and strength from realms above;
It must be tapestry of eternal weaving—
Its thread of gold our love—
Love that obeys the Church's word commanding
The sign of the Sacred Cross on the infant's brow;
Love in the young crusader's understanding
Of duty pledged in his Confirmation vow;
Love in the gift of self—the sublime oblation
Offered in penitent prayer and sin confess,
Brought to the Eucharist's feast for consecration,
Laid at the Saviour's feet to be touched and blessed.
Love in the marriage promises unbroken,
Placed on God's altar—left for His holy Will;
Abiding faith in the words of love once spoken:
"The dead are living still"—
So let us store in this temple we are raising
Wealth in its secret places for men to share,
Fragments of faith renewed and hymns of praising,
Flame of inspired word and of vivid prayer;
So down the years let us journey onward knowing
Spirits of light once travelled upon our way;
Ever their work lives on, we reap their sowing,
The torch of their faith still blazes the trail today;
Somewhere the Blessed Christ may be with them, waiting,
Watching—His unseen Presence hovering near.
O may He find this House of our creating
A Sanctuary here!

ANNE B. STARIN.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH

1873 - 1948

In the year 1872, a number of friends of the Rev. Theodore S. Rumney, D.D., then Rector of Christ Church, Germantown, considered the advisability of founding a new church and parish west of Germantown Ave. In one of their meetings, Mr. Henry H. Houston offered to give a lot at the corner of Wayne Ave. and Harvey St. on which to erect the church buildings. This generous offer was gratefully accepted. Plans were then made for the construction of a stone church, rectory and Sunday School building.

Ground was broken for the church May 30, 1873, and on June 30th, the cornerstone was laid by the Rt. Rev. William B. Stevens, D.D., Bishop of Pennsylvania.

On December 15, 1873, the Rev. Theodore Sill Rumney, D.D., was unanimously elected rector of the new parish and entered on his duties at once.

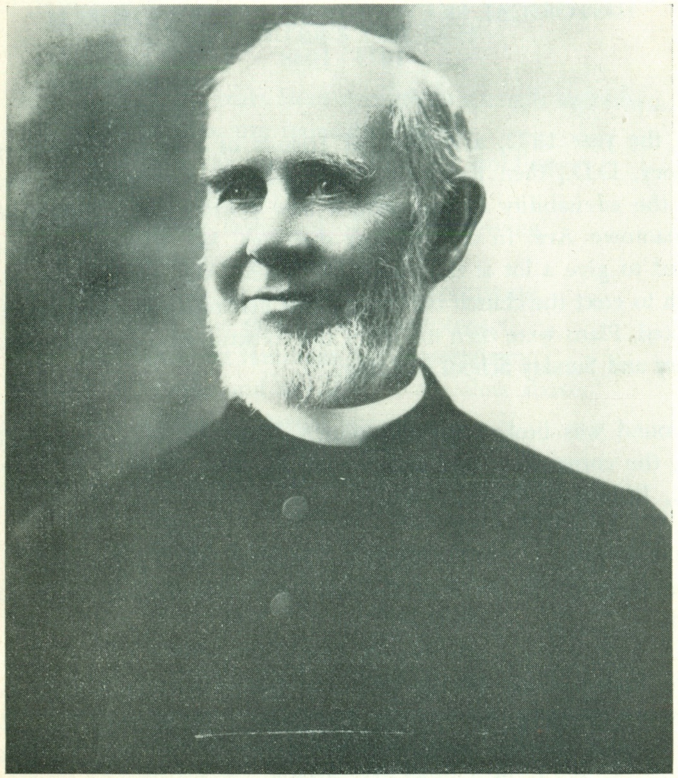
The Bishop of the Diocese formally opened the church on Sunday, December 21, 1873 (St. Thomas' Day), the rector assisting him. However, it was not consecrated until November 17, 1880 by Bishop Stevens, assisted by Bishop Nealy of Maine.

The foundation of the Sunday School building was laid in the fall of 1873 and on March 1, 1874 it was first occupied.

On March 2, 1874, the Charter of Incorporation was granted the church by the Court of Common Pleas, County of Philadelphia, by which the following persons were constituted Wardens and Vestrymen: Wardens, Henry H. Houston and Edmund A. Crenshaw; Vestrymen, Joseph H. Barry, Edward Bedlock, Marshall S. Shapleigh, Charles Bullock, Steven B. Kingston, Joseph A. Schaeffer, as well as the two Wardens.

At the Diocesan Convention held in May 1874, the parish was admitted into union with the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

Ground was broken for the Rectory May 17, 1883 and completed a year later.



THE REV. THEODORE S. RUMNEY, D.D.

On June 21, 1895, Mr. Henry H. Houston, for more than twenty-one years the Rector's Warden, entered into the rest of Paradise. To Mr. Houston, under God, St. Peter's Parish owes its origin and that financial support which insured its success and permanence from the beginning. Ever ready with his wise counsel, ever open-handed with his liberal gifts, ever helpful with his timely service, he was a tower of strength to his rector, a most generous and helpful friend to the parish he loved so well, and a wise and munificent steward of the wealth with which God blessed him.

Ground was broken on June 15, 1896 by the rector, for a new spacious and magnificent Chancel, given by Mrs. Henry H. Houston

THE REV. STEWART P. KEELING, D.D.

The Rev. Edward H. Vogt, 1931-

in loving memory of her husband. The work was completed and the first service held in it on January 24, 1897. It was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. O. W. Whittaker, D.D., Bishop of Pennsylvania on January 25, 1897.

In 1898 the three-story stone Parish House was erected by Mrs. Henry H. Houston to commemmorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Rev. Dr. Rumney's Rectorship of the parish.

After a ministry of thirty years, Dr. Rumney entered into his Great Reward at the age of 78. He had been a man of deep spirituality, wise

Interior of St. Peter's Church

judgment, and great consecration to his duty, an affectionate friend, good counselor and a devoted pastor. Any reference to his ministry would be incomplete without mention of Mrs. Rumney who cooperated so faithfully and successfully in the work of the parish. She was a woman of strong character and varied accomplishments.

In May 1903, the Rev. Stewart Pegram Keeling, Curate of the parish since July 1, 1901, was elected Minister in Charge with full authority and responsibility, on account of the severe and prolonged illness of Dr. Rumney, though Dr. Rumney retained the rectorship. On December 14, 1903, after Dr. Rumney's death, Mr. Keeling was unanimously elected rector.

INTERIOR OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD CHAPEL

By November 1923, the magnificent three-manual Skinner Organ, which we are now enjoying, was paid for by contributions of parishioners and friends of the parish, and was installed in the church building.

In the summer of 1930, the Rev. Edward H. Vogt, our present rector, was unanimously called to the office of Assistant Minister of St. Peter's Church, his duties to begin November 1, 1930, and to succeed to the rectorship upon the resignation of the Rev. Dr. Keeling, on or about July 26, 1931. However, due to the rector's severe illness, it became necessary for the Rev. E. H. Vogt to assume full responsibility of the spiritual care of the parish from the time of his arrival until Dr. Keeling's date of retirement as rector in July 1931.

Because the sessions of the Church School were transferred to the Parish House about 1928, the main auditorium of the Sunday School building was not in use from 1928 until 1934. In the spring of 1934 it was decided by the rector and vestrymen to so alter it that two-thirds of its floor space could be used for a chapel and the remainder for a choir room. This was made possible by a substantial bequest of Martha Wheatley Sutro, in whose memory the Chapel was set aside. On All Saints Day, November 1, 1934, the first service was held in it. The Rt. Rev. Francis M. Taitt, S.T.D., consecrated it as the Chapel of the Good Shepherd. The Rev. Dr. Keeling was the Celebrant of the Holy Communion, and the rector blest the many attractive and useful memorial furnishings provided by our people. Since that date there have been added eight well-designed stained glass memorial windows depicting the Life of our Lord and six beautiful memorial lanterns.

On July 17, 1943, the Rector Emeritus, the Rev. Stewart Pegram Keeling, D.D., at the age of 82, passed from this life into Paradise. This occurred in Washington, D.C., where he had been living since the time he retired. Of him it was truly stated in a Resolution of the Vestry "His impressive presence, his fine voice and his extraordinary command of the English language rendered him a matchless pulpit orator, while the depth of his conviction and irrefutability of his logic so impenetrated his teaching that attendance upon him became a memorable experience. Of great social charm and lively human sympathy, he enjoyed the admiring friendship and sincere devotion of all those whom he served as rector and with whom he came in contact in other relationships. Courtly gentleman, profound servant of his Master, he extended to his parish for thirty years the priceless privilege of his highest effort."

On January 26, 1947, twelve magnificent lanterns in the nave of the church and a new system of illumination in the chancel were blest in loving memory of the Rev. Dr. Keeling. These were presented by many of his old friends and parishioners as well as by members of the present congregation, all of whom felt, as the plaque concerning the memorial states, "He lighted the lamps before the Lord."

Of the organizations that have functioned in the parish, the Parish Guild of Women, formed on March 8, 1881, was among the first. It, in the course of years, became the Day Branch of the Woman's Auxiliary, inasmuch as its objective was purely missionary. The Brotherhood of St. John was started on September 30, 1881, and did a good work among the boys of the parish up to about twenty years ago. The

Young Woman's Chapter, organized October 19, 1881, now a part of the Night Branch of the Woman's Auxiliary, has served most admirably as another missionary group these many years. The Little Sisters of the Church, composed of girls, came into existence early after the parish was established, and for some years worked faithfully for various necessities of the parish and for missionary enterprises. The Mothers Meeting has continued from a very early date, to meet weekly to sew for causes outside of the parish. For many years there was a Chapter of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the parish, the work of which was wholly evangelistic in nature. The Men's Club came into existence during the Rev. Dr. Keeling's incumbency and has continued to function as a social organization for the men. The Young People's Society, also organized during Dr. Keeling's rectorship, is still carrying on a good work amongst the teen-agers. A junior group of this society was organized more recently. The Altar Guild was started by the present rector, to take care of all things pertaining to the altar and chancel preparatory to the services. The Quaintance Club of married couples was started a few years ago and has proven a decided means of making the couples better known to each other, as well as a source of real financial help to the parish. The Senior and Junior Chapters of the Daughters of the King were formed of late years for the study of the Bible, prayer and to assist the rector in a religious way.

It is with sincere appreciation that we, as rector and congregation, in this seventy-fifth year of St. Peter's Church, review its past progress and what has become ours because of the untiring efforts and sacrifices of those who were members during its life. We cannot allow what they accomplished, to do less than inspire us of 1948 to work through us the most and the best for the parish, so that we in our turn can hand down to those who will come after us, the result of a zealous and loving labor for Christ's Kingdom, our parish and our community.

OFFICERS OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH SINCE ITS ORGANIZATION IN 1873:

Rectors:

1873-1903	Rev. Theodore Sill Rumney, D.D.
1903-1931	Rev. Stewart Pegram Keeling, D.D.
1931-	Rev. Edward H. Vogt

Assistant Rectors:

Rev. T. P. Ege—1885-1888
Rev. Douglas I. Hobbs—1888-1889
Rev. Henry Bell Bryan—1889-1891
Rev. Wm. H. Cavanaugh—1891-1893
Rev. J. Marchant Hayman—1893-1901, 1904-1914
Rev. Stewart P. Keeling—1901-1903
Rev. George Clifford Moore—1903-1904
Rev. J. Ogle Warfield—1914-1916
Rev. Percy L. Urban—1916-1924
Rev. W. Winthrop Smith—1924-1927
Rev. Arthur K. Fenton—1927-1928
Rev. Edward H. Vogt—1930-1931

Rector's Wardens

Henry H. Houston
Stephen Greene
Samuel W. Wray
Samuel B. Bowen
Robert T. McCracken

Accounting Wardens

Edmund A. Crenshaw
Joseph S. Perot
Samuel W. Wray
Edward A. Groves
J. Lee Patton
Edwin W. Linscott
Herbert D. Syle

Vestrymen

Joseph B. Barry
Edmund A. Crenshaw
Edward Bedlock
Marshall S. Shapleigh
Charles Bullock
Stephen B. Kingston
Joseph Schaeffer
Henry H. Houston
Samuel K. Kille
Henry H. Kingston
Nathaniel B. Crenshaw
R. Singleton Peabody
F. S. Champion
George H. Purviance, M.D.
Joseph S. Perot
Stephen Greene
Samuel W. Wray
William T. Gumney
William C. Rehn
Samuel B. Bowen
Edwin D. Mullen
Edward A. Groves
J. Lee Patton
Benjamin H. Shoemaker
William S. Lloyd
Frank R. Watson
John G. Bullock
Clarence M. Brown
Joshua Ash Pearson
Robert T. McCracken
E. Perot Bissell
William S. Kriebel
Louis B. Runk
Edwin W. Linscott
Herbert D. Syle
Joseph M. Shoemaker
Frank T. Kalas
Robert H. Hutchinson
Gillingham F. Flack
William G. Alcorn
Lee S. Harris
Ernest D. Wilson
John W. Lord, Jr.
Francis C. Hartung, M.D.
Donald A. Hilsee

Organists

Mrs. R. Singleton Peabody—1873-1874
Mr. Adolph F. Glose, Jr.—1874-1880
Mr. Charles O. Frazier—1880-1891
Mr. Harry M. Staton—1891-1931
Mr. Robert Noehren—1931-1933
Mr. Ernest G. Landell—1933-1947
Mr. W. Clair Hower—1947-1948
Mr. Ellsworth C. Marcoe—1948-

1948

Rector—The Rev. Edward H. Vogt

Rector's Warden—Robert T. McCracken

Accounting Warden—Herbert D. Syle

Secretary pro tem—Lee S. Harris

Registrar—Lee S. Harris

Vestry—Robert T. McCracken, Herbert D. Syle, Louis B. Runk, Gillingham F. Flack, William G. Alcorn, Lee S. Harris, Ernest D. Wilson, John W. Lord, Jr., Francis C. Hartung, M.D., Robert H. Hutchinson, Donald A. Hilsee.